



Summer Meals Newsletter

DECEMBER 2015

IT'S COLD OUTSIDE...
BUT SUMMER PLANS ARE HEATING UP!

Summertime Q&A

Question:

What can State agencies do to encourage potential sponsors to become involved with the Program?



Answer:

Pair potential sponsors with a Summer Meals Mentor! State agencies can connect potential sponsors with an experienced sponsor that can offer an “on the ground” perspective and answer specific questions about how the Program

operates in the real world. Experienced sponsors can also take potential sponsors on as a sites to help them become more familiar with the Program before they begin sponsoring their own sites in the future.

Upcoming USDA and Partner Events

December 3rd, 1:00 pm EST

Food, Research, & Action Center (FRAC):
Summer Meals at Libraries

http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5118/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=79984

December 17th, 1:00 pm EST

Food, Research, & Action Center (FRAC):
Providing Quality Programming at your
Afterschool Meal Program

http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5118/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=79983

Partnership of the Month:

Let's Move! Cities, Towns & Counties

Let's Move! Cities, Towns & Counties (LMCTC) is a partnership between Federal agencies and local and organizations working to improve children's health and wellbeing. The partnership celebrates the success of local communities by awarding them with bronze, silver, and gold medals.

LMCTC sites can reach the “Gold Medal Benchmark” by championing the Summer Meals Program. City, town, and county governments can sponsor a Program, host sites, advertise the Program on billboards, and encourage local elected officials to issue a Summer Meals press release.

For more information, and to find a LMCTC site in your community, check out the Partnering with Let's Move! Cities, Towns & Counties Toolkit Page: <http://origin.drupal.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-Lets Move.pdf>



Now is the Time... For School Outreach!

Did you know...

In 2014, 21.7 million children received free or reduced-price meals during the school year, but only 3.8 million children received Summer Meals after the school year ended?

Schools are well-positioned to help States counter the “summer hunger gap” by supporting the Summer Food Service Program or Seamless Summer Option (SSO). State agencies can encourage schools to sponsor a Program, host a site, or assist with outreach and promotion.

Schools as Sponsors and Sites:

Schools operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are familiar with Federal meal pattern requirements and have facilities available to prepare and serve meals, making schools excellent sponsors and site locations. There are several advantages that State agencies can highlight when recruiting schools to work with the Program, including:

- Streamlined application process for schools in good standing with the NSLP.
- Use of a single non-profit food service account for all Child Nutrition Programs.
- Option to vend the Program, providing year-round work for school kitchen staff.
- Ability to extend existing vendor contacts to use USDA Foods in the SFSP.
- Stability from a year-round source of Federal meal reimbursements.
- Incentive for children to participate in summer learning programs or activities hosted by the school.
- Opportunity to recruit new community volunteers.
- Improved relations with families and the community.

When reaching out to schools, State agencies can share the No Kid Hungry School Calculator, which school officials can use to assess their annual estimated costs and reimbursements, and the potential increase in student participation, from adding the Summer Meals Program: <http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/business-model-tool-0>.



For a general overview of how to partner with schools, please see the “Working with Schools” Toolkit Page: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SMT-Schools.pdf>.



School Outreach and Promotion:

State agencies administering the NSLP are required to inform families of the availability and location of free Summer Meals. States can go above and beyond this requirement by empowering schools to become outreach “champions,” encouraging school officials to:

- Send informational Summer Meal pamphlets home with children.
- Include site location information in school newsletters.
- Post a link to the FNS Site Finder on the school’s webpage.
- Share information about the Program during parent-teacher conferences.
- Add a Summer Meals announcement to the school’s robo-call system.
- Hang a SummerFoodRocks! banner in front of the school.

The Summer Meal Toolkit has resources States can use when reaching out to local officials, superintendents, principals, and other school officials: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit>.